

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

#### XIII. God's Punishment For Utilizing Human Effort Versus Trusting Him With Our Fears (Isaiah 7:17-25)

##### I. Introduction

- A. Hebrews 11:6 claims that without faith, it is impossible to please God. The Lord calls people to trust Him.
- B. So, if one relies on human effort versus trusting God with what makes him afraid, God disciplines him.
- C. This was the experience of Judah's king Ahaz in Isaiah 7:17-25, and we study this passage for our insight:

##### II. God's Punishment For Utilizing Human Effort Versus Trusting God With Our Fears, Isaiah 7:17-25.

- A. After Judah's king Ahaz had refused to choose a sign from the Lord to encourage him that God would protect him from his foes in the Aram Israel alliance, and after God had graciously given him the sign of the supernatural virgin birth of the Messiah (Isaiah 7:10-16), an abrupt grammatical shift occurs at the start of Isaiah 7:17 where no connecting conjunction ties it to verse 16, E. J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, v. I, p. 294.
- B. This makes Isaiah 7:17 "a forceful climax" to the preceding "Immanuel prophecy," Ibid., fn. 43, and that forceful climax is a pronouncement of divine judgment for Ahaz's unbelief in God (as follows):
  1. Though God's prophet Isaiah had urged King Ahaz to request a sign from God, Ahaz had claimed he did not want to put God to the test by asking for such a sign because he already intended to obtain the help of the king of Assyria to counter the threat of the Aram and Israel alliance that opposed him, Ibid.
  2. Accordingly, immediately after the Lord had given His sign of the Messiah's supernatural virgin birth in Isaiah 7:10-16, God immediately addressed Ahaz to say in verse 17, "Upon thee, however, the Lord will bring the king of Assyria, for whom thou has been seeking," Ibid., fn. 43.
- C. This judgment for unbelief is explained in greater detail in Isaiah 7:17-25 (as follows):
  1. God would bring on king Ahaz and his subjects, and upon his father's house in the kings to come, difficult days such as had not come since the day the Northern Kingdom of Israel, signified in the name "Ephraim," had broken away from the Southern Kingdom of Judah, Isaiah 7:17a; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1049.
  2. Those hard days would involve the arrival of Assyria's king, but *not* to *help*, but to *harm* Judah, Isa. 7:17b.
  3. Thus, starting in Ahaz's era, "Judah was troubled by the Assyrian Empire, to which it had to pay a large tribute. Ahaz called on Tiglath-Pileser to rescue him from Aram and Israel, which the Assyrian king gladly did. However, Tiglath-Pileser gave Ahaz trouble, not help (2 Chron. 28:20-21). Then in Hezekiah's reign Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Judah, who had asked for help from Egypt (Isaiah 30:1-5), and was about to take it when, in 701 B. C., God miraculously delivered Jerusalem (chaps. 36-37). God's hand was in all this for He would whistle for flies from Egypt (i.e., Egyptian soldiers . . . and for bees from . . . Assyria (i.e., Assyrian soldiers . . ." Ibid.; Isaiah 7:17-19.
  4. Isaiah 7:20 describes how Assyria would humiliate Judah, what shaving one's hair and beard signified as it took the silver and gold from the Lord's temple and the treasures from the king's palace in 2 Kings 16:7-9 as hire from Judah to attack and destroy Syria; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Isaiah 7:20.
  5. Isaiah 7:21-22, speaking of an abundance of milk, told of distress where the death of young animals left their nursing mothers with no young to nurse, so their milk and curds were plentiful for man, and honey would be plentiful as wild flowers grew in empty fields and bees would be plentiful, Ibid., B. K. C., O. T.
  6. Due to such ruin of the land by the invaders, Judah's farmers would have no crops, and briars and thorns would grow up in the land with the fields being useful only for the grazing of livestock, Isaiah 7:23-25.
  7. Essentially, then, "(a)ll this would fulfill the sign given Ahaz by Isaiah (Isa. 7:15): he will eat curds and honey," signifying the hardship to come on the land of Judah, Ibid.

***Lesson:*** Since Judah's king Ahaz chose to handle his fear of the Aram-Israel alliance by calling on the king of Assyria to defeat the alliance versus heeding God's messenger by asking for an encouraging sign from the Lord as to His help, God sent Ahaz what he requested, the king of Assyria, but that proved to be harmful, not a blessing.

***Application:*** (1) May we NOT rely on human solutions for what makes us afraid, but trust in God and do what He says. (2) Ahaz used the wealth of God's temple and what he had in his own palace to hire the help of Assyria's king, so he relied on the mammon of unrighteousness versus God opposite Jesus' word in Matthew 6:24. May we then NOT rely on what money can buy for "blessing," but trust in God as our TRUE Source of TRUE blessing! (3) When God gives us a message to trust in Him as He did to Ahaz, we had better HEED it lest He JUDGE us!